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No. 29

House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BURNS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 9, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MAX BURNS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill and a concurrent resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 741. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with regard to new animal drugs, and for other purposes.

S. Con. Res. 96. Concurrent resolution commemorating the 150th anniversary of the first meeting of the Republican Party in Ripon, Wisconsin.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) for 5 minutes.

CURRENT STATE OF OUR ECONOMY

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about the current state of our economy here in the U.S. Three years and three massive tax cuts later, President Bush keeps telling American working families that our economy is turning the corner and that jobs are going to be coming soon. Well, Mr. President, where are the jobs? Where are those promises you made?

Last Friday brought more disappointing news about our jobless recovery. In fact, only 21,000 new jobs were created last month. Many economists had expected 125,000 new jobs, and the President promised 300,000 new jobs. The disastrous job creation levels are further evidence that the Bush economic policies are not working. However, the President continues to insist that his plan is the right approach.

President Bush was in my home State of California last Friday when the dismal employment numbers were released. He was in Bakersfield, a town with an unemployment rate of 12.8 percent, painting an uplifting and positive picture of our troubled economy. When he learned that a local business there would be creating two new jobs, the President called it really good news. We need far more than two and three new jobs, Mr. President, to put our State back on track.

The Bush economic policies have been a disaster for our State. Rather than create jobs, we have lost 3 million private sector jobs under this administration. If the rest of the year mirrors last month's numbers, it would take 9 years, 9 years, to recover all the jobs lost under this President.

Much of the job loss has been in the manufacturing sector, where job loss is at a 53-year high. Another 3,000 manufacturing jobs disappeared last month because of outsourcing, a policy that the Bush administration says is healthy for our economy. Long-term

unemployment also continues to be a very, very serious problem. The average out-of-work American is now unemployed for 5 months, the highest in 20 years.

A report recently released by the Economic Policy Institute and the National Employment Law Project found that college graduates, older workers, and workers in the manufacturing industry disproportionately are likely to experience long-term chronic unemployment in our current economy. To make matters worse, President Bush wants to make it even more difficult for those to find work.

Under his budget proposals this year, worker training and assistance programs for millions of Americans would be cut significantly. He wants to reduce access to worker training, child care support, housing assistance and college tuition relief and public health insurance at a time when most working families need help the most. I think that is wrong.

Those of us that live in my district know how hard it has been. The reality is that in my district we have very high unemployment rates. In the cities that I represent, particularly East Los Angeles where about 70 to 80 percent of the population are Latino families, they are experiencing up to 10 percent and above unemployment rates. It has been that way for the last 3 years.

Where is the relief for the districts that I represent, for the hardworking Americans that contribute to our taxing system here and get nothing in return when they really need it?

I would ask for us to take a strong look at the policies that this administration is advocating and postpone the tax cuts for the wealthy and restore integrity in the health care services and in our education and in our environment.

Our environment is suffering. Latino children in my district suffer higher rates of chronic illnesses, asthma, obesity, and diabetes. If these issues are

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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